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Salvation Without Repentance.

A lengthy article in the *Herald of Truth*, the Mennonite paper published at Elkhart, Ind., appeared under the above caption, recently, criticizing an article published in the EVANGELIST, under the title of "Consecrating Children." We asserted in that article that repentance is no pre-requisite to salvation where there is no sin. Our critic admits that the statement "is not absolutely false in itself, but the connection in which it stands makes it say what is not the teaching of the Scriptures."

We beg to differ from our esteemed religious contemporary upon the logical conclusion drawn from the connection in which it stands; it does not contradict the teachings of the Scriptures. The writer, evidently, like many others, cannot see any difference between the salvation of sinners and compliance with divine law on the part of the righteous. Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost, truly; but that was not the extent of his mission. He came also to set up a kingdom, and every kingdom must have laws and the subjects thereof must obey them, let their moral conduct be what it may. The man who wishes to become a subject, must comply with the regular laws that apply to his case. When the sinner demands admission into the house of faith, reformation is necessary; he must repent of his sins: but the devout man and the man that fears God, is already above the law of repentance and assuming that he has lived, by nature, in obedience to all moral law a portion of his life before the kingdom of God was set up and brought to his notice, it certainly would not be required of him to indulge in sin in order to repent that he might become a subject of the new institution. Otherwise an attempt to comply with a law of repentance would on his part be sham and hypocrisy. Our critic even asserts that Cornelius was a sinner, and sets his repentance back at some unknown period before a law of repentance was given, in order, we suppose, to preserve the old doctrine that men must be devils before they are competent to become Christians.

We would like to ask our esteemed contemporary how much time is required to complete a repentance sufficiently broad and deep to entitle men to the rights of Christian fellowship. The jailer believed and was baptized the same hour of the night that the prison doors opened. Was his repentance a work of ten minutes? If there was any it could not have been much longer. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," is the only condition of

salvation given in the text in that case, and it was followed by baptism.

The context in the account of the baptism of the Eunuch favors the conclusion that no repentance was preached to him. Baptism was made prominent; for when the Eunuch came to a water he desired to know what hindered him from being baptized. Belief only was required.

The common belief about the relation that repentance bears to salvation is vague and indefinite. Repentance, in New Testament language means reformation only. The whole Christian life is a work of reform; and the Christian Church is a reformatory. The sinner only begins his work of reformation when he enters the church; and repentance can not be a pre-requisite to church membership in every case that comes up. If the system of two years training in Christian doctrine and practices before baptism, which existed in the third and subsequent centuries was restored, repentance before baptism and church association would appear more like a pre-requisite, than it does where there is not an hour's time between the first hearing of the teachings of Jesus Christ and adoption into the family of faith.

We are, soul and body and all, for reformation where there is need of repentance; but we cannot subscribe to the doctrine that human beings must become evil before the Church of Jesus Christ will admit them as members; and that children must know sin before they can be allowed to follow and serve Christ.

How the Evangelist is Influenced by the Weather.

The Spring weather thus far has not been very inspiring. The editors must of course write something whether the atmosphere and general surroundings are favorable to a flow of intellectual lore or not. With our correspondents it is different. They know the EVANGELIST will pay its weekly visits, whether they will, or will not finish and send in that article they commenced a week ago, when the sun peeped out from behind the clouds for a few short moments, and laid aside again when his visage was hid by the snow storm. They expect, of course, the EVANGELIST will come, and they even expect its coming will be a sort of a panacea for the gloominess and general demoralization that the late spring with its concomitants of muddy roads, depleted hay-mows, and portends of a rush of work when oats sowing, corn and potato planting, house cleaning, garden making &c. &c. &c. all come claiming attention from the busy farmer and housewife all in the same day and week.

Unfortunately, however, at this time of gloom and despondency, when even the brightest, most inspiring, newsiest and most judiciously managed paper would fail to receive encomiums from the disheartened patron in consequence of the peculiarly perturbed condition of his mental and moral as well as physical constitution, the paper, too, has partaken of the conditions of its unfavorable surroundings, and does not come up to the average standard in any of its departments. It is then that we

are made to suffer in every way, except in the way that chastisement, afflictions and tribulations will have a salutary effect on our perturbed spirit and emaciated pocket-book.

One reader finds fault with the general make-up of the paper. The reading matter has not been well arranged, and the paper has an unprofessional appearance to his artistic or æsthetic nature.

Another is disappointed that there has been too much space devoted in the editorial department to the discussion of dead issues, and too much ammunition wasted on aquatic fowls that have virtually succumbed to our grape and canister long since, and were hardly worth shooting in the first place. An other thinks we should make it more lively in our fusillade in this direction so as to awaken those who are not dead, but only sleeping, when we fire, and are secretly doing us great harm.

Another has fault to find with the correspondence and church news department.

There is too little of it and hardly up to the standard what there is of it. The correspondents and preachers must have gone fishing and the editor has not done his duty by granting them a furlough. The half dozen articles that were commenced, and never finished by them, have not appeared, and forgetting that they never sent them, they blame the editors for throwing original matter into the waste basket, and filling up the paper with inferior articles clipped from inferior papers and written by inferior authors, whose productions are not worth reading. Then as an agent he becomes discouraged to try to solicit subscribers for such a stale paper, and the mails to the editors contains only exchanges, notices from delinquents with three months subscription due, to "Stop my paper for the present," and complaints from the mud-bound post offices that "We did not get last week's paper." With these influences and prospects for his surroundings, the editor is made to sympathize with the farmers and the rest of mankind, when the spring is late, and the weather is damp and cold, and the roads in a liquid condition. It is all in the weather, brethren and sisters, all in the weather; but with increase in faith and devotion to duty and a disposition cultivated to always look at the bright side, we will get over this weather and late spring, and sail over into fairer skies and brighter prospects, by and by.

Conferences in Promoting Harmony.

On the 14th day of May next, the United Brethren in Christ, of the United States, will hold a General Conference, and some of the adherents of that society hope and expect that it will increase the harmony and usefulness of the Church a hundredfold. One correspondent, in their church organ, says there is need of additional legislation on some questions, and changes on others, seems to be admitted by all; and adds, that "this is the time when these vexed questions come prominently before the Church and demand a fair discussion."

This matter of additional "legislation" is one that annoyed the

Christian Church during the centuries past, as well as at the present. When additional legislation is commenced, no one knows when and where to stop; and it is only reasonable to assume that if one man, or any gathering of men, have the authority to make laws for other men to obey in spiritual affairs, men who follow after certainly have the same rights, and under such a system, obedience to different and contrary laws would be the condition of salvation. What would take a man to heaven at one time would be wholly inadequate at another, and the way of life would be the most uncertain way in all creation.

Unification by means of general conferences has been a favorite work among religious leaders of all periods; and in the Dark Ages the Roman power almost accomplished that desirable end; but the means which were used and the condition in which the unified existed, offer no testimony in favor of such an undertaking.

Unity upon any other grounds than the broadest freedom upon the Gospel of Christ, means oppression, tyranny and ring-dictation, under a pretence of Christian piety and true holiness. A departure from the plain Word, means the hoisting of the flood-gates set against the river of evil that flows from the great fountain of iniquity—Satan.

Roman Catholic Representation.

The Rev. Eugene Brady S. J. of Xavier College, Cincinnati, undertakes to show from statistics and figures of his own manipulating, that the Catholic Church is increasing at a rate so much greater than that of the Protestant churches that the latter must sooner or later die out entirely. To use his own language he says of Protestantism: "It has been digging graves for its children for more than three hundred years. In a brief space there will be no children to enter." It is rather strange that this manipulator of statistics should admit immediately after this expression that eight ecclesiastical bodies, which he names, have increased numerically in the last twenty-five years 14,000,000. On the other hand Mr. Brady claims for the Catholics an increase from 3,175,000 in 1860, to 9,500,000 in 1865, but the Catholic directory last year shows the Catholic population to be only 6,833,176. The fact is, the Catholic population has increased very fast in this country, owing, however, largely to the large number of Catholic immigrants into this country.

Taken all over the world the showing is not so favorable for them. Those who say that Protestantism is either dead or dying, are either not acquainted with the facts or wilfully misrepresent.

We have before us a work by Daniel Dorchester D. D., giving carefully compiled statistics derived from both Protestant and Catholic sources, which makes a true showing of the problem of religious progress, both as regards the relative strength between Catholicism and Protestantism, and religion and irreligion or infidelity. This work shows that Romanism, starting on a basis of about Eighty Millions in the year 1500, has gained

in Europe sixty-nine millions; and Protestantism, starting soon after from unity, has gained seventy-four millions in the same territory. Within the last twenty-five years Protestantism has made large inroads into the Roman Catholic countries of Europe, laying the foundation for numerous churches and communicants before another generation shall pass away.

In summing up its comparisons in the United States, this same work says: "During the last ten years the gain of Romanism has been less than in the two preceding decades, while the Evangelical churches have gained more than ever before. 'Present indications justify the prediction that Romanism has passed the period of her most rapid increase in the United States, and must henceforth relatively decline.'"

It is Catholicism that is losing ground; and not only are its numbers decreasing in proportion to Protestant churches, but the spirit of liberty, in this country, is being infused into its adherents, and the Power of the Pope over his subjects is on the wane. It is the conflict of light against darkness, and darkness must eventually succumb to the glorious light of the Sun of Righteousness.

Souls not Immortal.

The article under the above caption in a recent issue of the EVANGELIST has called out several vigorous responses already, and others will probably follow. Bro. A. will likely undertake to maintain his position, and as the theme is a deep and important one in Christian doctrine, the Doctrinal and Controversial Departments will have a peculiar attraction to those interested in that question, during the next month or two.

The publication of the articles will begin at the same time with those announced in the Publisher's Department, which will make the EVANGELIST very interesting during the summer.

Now brethren, we are working hard to give you a good paper, and we need several hundred additions to our subscription list to arrive at the close of the year with even nothing more for our toil and care than a naked living. There are yet a few of our members who are not taking the paper and we feel that they ought to give us that aid, and in addition, there is a broad field outside of the Church which can be cultivated with good results. Several of our zealous brethren and sisters are doing this now and with encouraging results. Every one can do something in the line of private missionary work in this way, and while the Cause is assisted, and needed aid is given to us, souls are also benefitted.

May we all be diligent in good works and labor as one man to prosecute the great work in which we are engaged.

The first step to virtue is to love virtue in another.

God is often lost in prayer and ordinances.

The European war cloud still hangs suspended in uncertainty as to its future outcome. There is considerable secrecy connected with the diplomacy on both sides, and the preparation for war is progressing on both sides.